

5 establishing a current system state of the controller related to a previous
6 system state of the controller that was in effect after a previous use of the
7 controller by the first user and before a use of the controller by a second user; and
8 providing access to functionality of a consumer device by use of the
9 controller;
10 wherein said access is dependent upon the bio-metric input;
11 wherein said use of the controller by the second user caused the controller
12 to have a system state different than the previous system state.

1 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the bio-metric user-identification input
2 component is a fingerprint pad.

1 3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the controller is a hand-held controller.

1 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the controller comprises a display area,
2 and further comprising the step of displaying on the display area data representing
3 available functions to be executed.

1 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the bio-metric user-identification input
2 component is a microphone.

1 6. (Amended) The method of Claim 5, wherein the bio-metric input is voice
2 data, and wherein the voice data is received after the controller is prepared for
3 input in response to a request to process the voice data.

1 7. The method of Claim 5, wherein the controller is a hand-held controller.

1 8. The method of Claim 7, wherein the controller comprises a display area,
2 and further comprising the step of displaying on the display area data representing
3 available functions to be executed.

1 9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the consumer device is a television.

1 11. The method of Claim 1, wherein the controller comprises a display
2 area, and further comprising the step of displaying on the display area data
3 representing the current system state.

1 12. The method of Claim 1, wherein the controller comprises a plurality of
2 physical actuating buttons.

1 13. The method of Claim 1, wherein the current system state is
2 substantially identical to the previous system state.

1 14. The method of Claim 1, wherein the current system state is identical
2 to the previous system state.

1 15. The method of Claim 1, wherein the current system state prevents use
2 of the controller for accessing pay-per-view programming.

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1 17. (Amended) A controller comprising:
2 a bio-metric input component; and
3 a graphical display;
4 wherein the controller, upon log-on thereto by a first user, is programmed
5 to enter a current system state related to a previous system state of the controller
6 that was in effect after a previous use of the controller by the first user and before
7 a use of the controller by a second user, both uses occurring before said log-on;
8 wherein said log-on occurs in response to the first user inputting bio-metric
9 input into the bio-metric input component.

1 18. The controller of Claim 17, wherein the bio-metric input component is
2 a fingerprint pad, and the bio-metric input comprises a fingerprint pattern.

1 19. The controller of Claim 17, wherein the bio-metric input component is
2 a microphone, and the bio-metric input comprises voice data.

1 20. The controller of Claim 17 wherein the controller is a hand-held
2 controller.

1 21. The controller of Claim 17, further comprising a plurality of physical
2 actuating buttons.

1 22. The controller of Claim 17, wherein the current system state is
2 substantially identical to the previous system state.

1 23. The controller of Claim 17, wherein the controller is programmed to
2 display a representation of the current system state on the display.

1 24. The controller of Claim 17, wherein the current system state prevents
2 use of the controller for accessing pay-per-view programming.

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1 27. (Amended) A method of accessing functionality of a consumer device
2 comprising the steps:
3 determining an identity of a first user in response to bio-metric input
4 supplied by the first user to a controller;
5 establishing a first system state of the controller, said first system state
6 being associated with said identity;
7 providing access to a first set of functionality of a consumer device by use
8 of the controller, said access being dependent upon the identity of the first user;
9 and
10 switching to a second system state from the first system state at a time
11 calculated by an algorithm which incorporates at least one factor other than the
12 passage of a certain amount of time.

1 28. The method of Claim 27, wherein the second system state prevents
2 use of the controller for accessing pay-per-view programming.

1 29. The method of Claim 27, wherein the second system state allows use
2 of the controller for conducting e-commerce transactions via the Internet.

1 31. The method of Claim 30, wherein the display is on the controller.

1 32. The method of Claim 27 wherein the consumer device is a set-top box.

1 33. The method of Claim 27, wherein the at least one factor is the identity
2 of the first user.

1 34. The method of Claim 27, wherein the at least one factor is a category
2 of use associated with the consumer device.

1 35. The method of Claim 27, wherein the at least one factor is a subject
2 matter of activity within a category of use associated with the consumer device.

1 36. The method of Claim 27 wherein the second system state is associated
2 with a second set of functionality different than the first set of functionality.

1 37. The method of Claim 27, wherein the second system state is
2 associated with an identity of a second user.

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1 38. (Amended) A method of accessing functionality of a consumer device
2 comprising the steps:
3 determining an identity of a first user in response to bio-metric input
4 supplied by the first user to a controller;

5 establishing a first system state of the controller, said first system state
6 being associated with said identity;
7 providing access to a first set of functionality of a consumer device by use
8 of the controller, said access being dependent upon the identity of the first user;
9 and
10 switching to a second system state from the first system state in response
11 to a predetermined amount of time passing after establishing the first system state,
12 said second system state being related to a previous system state of the controller
13 that was in effect after a previous use of the controller by a second user which
14 occurred prior to establishing the first system state.

1 39. The method of Claim 38, wherein the second system state is
2 substantially identical to the previous system state.

1 40. The method of Claim 38, wherein the second system state is a default
2 system state.

1 41. The method of Claim 38, wherein the predetermined amount of time
2 is calculated by an algorithm which incorporates at least one factor other than the
3 passage of a certain amount of time.

1 42. The method of Claim 41, wherein the other factor is the identity of the
2 first user.

1 43. The method of Claim 41, wherein the at least one factor is a category
2 of use associated with the consumer device.

1 44. The method of Claim 41, wherein the at least one factor is a subject
2 matter of activity with a category of activity associated with the consumer device.

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1 45. (New) A method of accessing functionality of a consumer device
2 comprising the steps:
3 determining an identity of a first user in response to a bio-metric input
4 supplied by the first user to a controller;
5 establishing a first system state of the controller, said first system state
6 being associated with said identity;
7 providing access to a first set of functionality of a consumer device by use
8 of the controller, said access being dependent upon the identity of the first user;
9 and
10 establishing a second system state of the controller in response to a second
11 bio-metric input supplied by the first user to the controller, wherein said second
12 system state is associated with a group user identity;
13 providing access to a second set of functionality of a consumer device by
14 use of the controller, said access being dependent upon the group user identity;
15 wherein said second bio-metric input is supplied by the first user prior to
16 another bio-metric input being supplied to the controller by a different user;
17 wherein the first user is associated with said group user identity.

1 46. (New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the bio-metric input component
2 is a fingerprint pad.

1 47. (New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the controller is a hand-held
2 controller.

1 48. (New) The method of Claim 47, wherein the controller comprises a
2 display area, and further comprising the step of displaying on the display area data
3 representing available functions to be executed.

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1 49. (New) A method of allowing access to functionality of a consumer device
2 comprising the steps:

16 3 receiving a bio-metric input of a first user into a bio-metric user-identification
4 input component of a controller;
5 establishing a current system state of the controller similar to a previous
6 system state of the controller that was in effect after a previous use of the controller
7 by the first user and before a use of the controller by a second user; and
8 providing access to functionality of a consumer device by use of the
9 controller;
10 wherein said access is dependent upon the bio-metric input;
11 wherein said use of the controller by the second user caused the controller
12 to have a system state different than the previous system state.

1 50. (New) The method of Claim 15 wherein the current system state
2 prevents use of the controller for accessing pay-per-view programming by a time-
3 out feature or a lock feature.

1 51. (New) A method of accessing functionality of a consumer device
2 comprising the steps:
3 receiving a bio-metric input of a first user into a bio-metric user-identification
4 input component of a controller;
5 establishing a current system state of the controller similar to a previous
6 system state of the controller that was in effect after a previous use of the controller
7 by the first user and before a use of the controller by a second user; and
8 providing access to functionality of a consumer device by use of the
9 controller;
10 wherein said access is dependent upon the bio-metric input;
11 wherein said use of the controller by the second user caused the controller
12 to have a system state similar to the previous system state.

1 52. (New) A method of accessing functionality of a consumer device
2 comprising the steps: